

Message Text

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ACTION HA-05

INFO OCT-01 EA-10 IO-13 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 INR-07
NSAE-00 PA-01 USIA-06 PRS-01 SP-02 /046 W
-----055712 200122Z /21

R 191030Z JAN 78
FM AMEMBASSY BANGKOK
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8439
AMCONSUL SONGKHLA
INFO USMISSION GENEVA
AMCONSUL HONG KONG
AMEMBASSY KUALA LUMPUR
INS WASHDC

C O N F I D E N T I A L BANGKOK 2004

HONG KONG FOR DIDIR/INS FELDMAN
INS/CO FOR BROBSON

EO 11652: GDS
TAGS: SREF
SUBJ: INDOCHINESE REFUGEES: THREAT TO FORCE OUT TO SEA A
RECENTLY ARRIVED BOAT IN SONGKHLA

REF: (A) BANGKOK 1913 (B) BANGKOK 1915

1. KEY INTERIOR MINISTRY OFFICIALS CONCERNED WITH REFUGEES ARE CURRENTLY TRAVELING OUTSIDE BANGKOK. THERE IS NO WAY TO REACH THEM TODAY ON THE THREAT TO FORCE OUT TO SEA THE BOAT OF 16 VIETNAMESE REFUGEES WHO ARRIVED IN SONGKHLA JANUARY 18 (REFTELS). WE BELIEVE THAT THE UNHCR SHOULD STAY IN FRONT ON THIS AND OTHER REFUGEE PROBLEMS. THE UNITED STATES ALONE SHOULD NOT BE EXPECTED TO RESPOND TO RECURRENT LOCAL THREATS.

2. THE LOCAL UNHCR REPRESENTATIVE IN BANGKOK, WITH WHOM WE HAVE BEEN IN CONTACT ON THIS ISSUE, IS DESPATCHING ONE OF HIS SUBORDINATES TO SONGKHLA JANUARY 20. THAT OFFICER PLANS TO
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CONTACT PROVINCIAL OFFICIALS, EVALUATE THE SITUATION, AND ADVISE HIS HEADQUARTERS ON COURSES OF ACTION. THE EMBASSY REFUGEE SECTION HAS ALREADY SCHEDULED A JANUARY 21 TRIP TO SONGKHLA FOR THE ACTING DEPUTY COORDINATOR, AN INS OFFICER, AND THE BOAT CASE COORDINATOR. THE TRIP WILL GO AHEAD AS PLANNED.

3. THE PRESSURE POINT ON SONGKHLA AUTHORITIES IS IN BANGKOK

RATHER THAN IN THE PROVINCE. WHEN RTG CENTRAL GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS BECOME AVAILABLE, THE UNHCR REPRESENTATIVE IN BANGKOK INTENDS TO MAKE THE POINT THAT CHANTHABURI PROVINCIAL OFFICIALS ACCEPTED THREE BOATLOADS TOTALLING 102 REFUGEES LAST WEEK. THE SONGKHLA STANCE THEREFORE SEEMS INEXPLICABLE, PARTICULARLY IN TERMS OF THE PRIME MINISTER'S STATEMENT TO THE PRESS THAT THAILAND WOULD NOT FORCE BOATS BACK OUT TO SEA. WHITEHOUSE

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Message Attributes

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Draft Date: 19 jan 1978
Decaption Date: 01 jan 1960
Decaption Note:
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Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
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